

## Generations

# Studies in human nature

Studies have been done for just about every aspect of our daily lives in an effort to find out exactly what makes us tick.

For instance, the most popular study was the one done about the right way or wrong way to hang a roll of toilet paper, which, according to an article by Hana Hong courtesy of *Reader's Digest*, a survey showed that those selecting the overhand method were more dominant than their submissive counterparts who selected the underhanded roll.

Since I never thought about which way I rolled, I got up from my desk and surveyed both bathrooms and discovered that I have a dominant personality. The article further suggests that the way the toilet paper is rolled might even be helpful in determining compatibility with a prospective mate. Hmm ... perhaps this explains why I'm 18 years with the same man, one who happens to share the same overhand method.

Another study suggests that one can determine another's personality through his or her choice in footwear. People who wear comfortable shoes tend to be relatively agreeable, ankle boots are generally worn by those who are more aggressive, uncomfortable shoes indicates a calmer person (which I can't figure out why since tight shoes make me anything but calm), while those with new and well-maintained footwear are more anxious.

I'll have to be the odd one out on that study since I'm a bare-foot or slipper kind of gal, and I faithfully provide The Salvation Army with a bag of shoes annually because they've contributed to bunions and corns courtesy of 10 cramped toes.

A study published in the *Journal*

*of Personality and Social Psychology* found that one's handshake



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can alter another's impression of you simply by your grip, temperature, dryness, strength, duration, vigor, texture and eye contact.

Those who shook firmly indicated a more emotionally expressive, extroverted, and positive personality than limp shakers, who were deemed to be shy and neurotic.

When you're nervous, frustrated or bored, do you bite your nails or play with your hair? A study in 2015 analyzed people's personalities and those that compulsively tugged on their hair or bit their nails tended to gravitate toward perfectionism. They say, however, that the habit is actually comforting because repetitive behavior combats stress (and it keeps the nail salons in business).

I'm guilty on this one because I'm a mascara picker, and neither eye is safe at the end of a long day and a boring TV show. Unfortunately, however, these days the eyelashes that come out with the flakes of mascara don't grow back like they used to, but it's a tough habit to break.

Ah, the next one I loved. A study published in the *Journal of Research in Personality* suggests that timeliness is an accurate assessment of positive character traits. In the study, researchers asked participants to complete a personality assessment at home and come to the laboratory for a group experiment. By analyzing the participants' time of arrival, they found punctual people were more conscientious and agreeable; being early was connected to neuroticism. And those who

are chronically late tended to be more laid-back.

I've always been early, which further adds to my suppressed neurosis thanks to this study, but I've tried very hard to overcome this personality flaw in the last 50 years. It's the only thing I most likely will be late for.

According to the article, graphology is the analysis of handwriting and how it relates to personality. Experts can detect more than 5,000 personality traits from handwriting; for example, people who write large are people-oriented and attention-seeking, and those with small handwriting are introverted and capable of acute concentration. Writing with a slight right slant means you're friendly and impulsive; a left slant means you're reserved and individualistic. No slant suggests you're logical and pragmatic. Lastly, handwriting with heavy pressure indicates you have strong emotions and are quick to react, but a light pressure implies an easiness and ability to move from place to place.

In other words, as long as you know how to write, you're a pretty good egg. I'm a slight right slant, medium press, handwriter who continually loses roller-ball pens, shells out plenty of cash for the bold-black-and-blue-ink treasures, but undoubtedly will come up empty when hunting for one in a hurry.

So, in summary, and much like the toilet-paper study mentioned at the beginning of this column, the way you roll it doesn't really prove a thing as long as it happens to be on the roll.

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